

Message Text

SECRET

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 303612 TOSEC 250035

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT CAIRO 13041 ACTION SECSTATE 29 DEC 75

QUOTE

S E C R E T CAIRO 13041

NODIS

FOR UNDERSECRETARY SISCO FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR PFOR EG IS US

SUBJECT: E-1 SITE CONTROVERSY

REF STATE 303536; CAIRO 13018 AND 13020

1. WHEN MEETING WITH FAHMY THIS MORNING, I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD REPORTED HIS AND GENERAL FAHMY'S COMMENTS ON E-1 SITE CONTROVERSY TO WASHINGTON FOR ITS CONSIDERATION. I HAD NOW RECEIVED A REPLY ENDORSING THE COMMENT I HAD MADE TO GENERAL FAHMY THAT THIS IS PROPERLY A TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION BY THE JOINT COMMISSION (JC) MEETING. WITH GOODWILL ON BOTH SIDES, IT OUGHT

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TO BE POSSIBLE TO WORK IT OUT. IN AN EFFORT TO BE

HELPFUL, HOWEVER, WASHINGTON HAD INSTRUCTED OUR AMBASSADOR IN TEL AVIV TO SPEAK TO THE ISRAELIS ABOUT OUR HOPE THAT THE MATTER CAN BE WORKED OUT, BUT THAT WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT IS APPROPRIATE FOR US TO GET INTO THE MIDDLE ON MERITS OF QUESTION WHICH SHOULD BE SETTLED BY JC.

2. FAHMY EXPRESSED APPRECIATION AT OUR WILLINGNESS SPEAK TO ISRAELIS. HE WAS NEVERTHELESS IN A SOMEWHAT BELLIGERENT MOOD. IF ISRAELIS PERSIST IN THIS TYPE OF TACTIC OR ADMANTLY REFUSE TO PERMIT EGYPTIAN CONSTRUCTION TEMA TO GO IN AS STIPULATED UNDER GENEVA PROTOCOL HE WARNED, GOEWILL STOP OR DELAY THE NEXT ISRAELI CARGO THAT WANTS TO TRANSIT THE CANAL. IF THE ISRAELIS WANT TO BE "CLEVER", EGYPTIANS CAN WILL RECIPROCAT. IF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SINAI AGREEMENT IS HELD UP BECAUSE OF THIS TYPE OF CONTROVERSY, SO FAR AS HE IS CONCERNED THIS MAKES LITTLE DIFFERENCE. AS WE KNEW FROM THE OUTSET, HE REGARDS SINAI II WITHDRAWAL ARRANGEMENTS AS INCOMMENSURATE WITH THE PRICE PAID. THEY ARE HARDLY ANYTHING. HE THOUGHT THAT EVEN SADAT IS BEGINNING TO REALIZE THIS. SADAT HAD AGREED TO SINAI II ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT USG WILL MOUNT MAJOR EFFORT IN 1977 TOGO FOR AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT. BUT SADAT, FAHMY CLAIMED, IS MINDFUL OF THE FACT THAT EGYPT HAS RISKED MUCH POLITICALLY IN THE ARAB WORLD ON THE CREDIBILITY OF OUR COMMITMENT. WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL HAPPEN BY 1977 AND WHO WILL BE IN OFFICE IN US AT THAT TIME, HE ASKED RHETORICALLY?

3. I TOLD FAHMY NOT DO ANYTHING FOOLISH. WHILE I COULD APPRECIATE EGYPTIAN VEXATION ABOUT THE E-1 SITE CONTROVERSY, THIS IS SURELY A MATTER THAT THE TWOPARTIES CAN WORK OUT IN JC. SUCH PROBLEMS HAVE ARISN IN PAST AND WILL ARISE AGAIN. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT BOTH PARTIES APPROACH THEM WITH A DESIRE TO FIND A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION. JC IS RIGHT FORUM FOR THIS PURPOSE AND, IN CASE HE HAD NOT HEARD THIS FROM SOME OF HIS COLLEAGUES, I HAD BEEN TOLD BY

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SENIOR EGYPTIAN MILITARY OFFICIALS THAT THE ISRAELIS HAVE THUS FAR CONDUCTED THEMSELVES AT THESE MEETINGS IN A VERY BUSINESSLIKE AND PROPER FASHION. THIS WAS ALSO SIILASVUO'S VIEW. I HOPED, THEREFORE, THAT TODAY'S JC MEETING SHOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM.

6. SUGGEST DEPT PASS THIS MESSAGE TO TEL AVIV.

EILTS

UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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NNN

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